JINXES, 'HANTS' AND OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS

Two Dollar Bill May Be Unlucky, but There Are Ways to Foil the Hoodoo---Gems in Prose and Poetry

By DAN CAREY.

I SING of the Jinx.

Really I would have forgotten all about this most important phase of life had it not been for the fact that our austere cashier (I believe all cashiers are more or less austere), gave me a $2 bill the other day in handing me the $12.70 which I received for my week's work.

Speaking of cashiers, isn't it remarkable what a distorted view they get of life! Probably they handle so much money that isn't their own that they have an exaggerated idea of the value of the little coins that are turned out by the millions from the mint over in Philadelphia. They grow absolutely punctillious about money matters, just as if it made any difference whether a nickel carries you or some one else on the subway. The main idea is that one nickel gets one ride. The personnel of the train doesn't matter.

Then there are bank cashiers, poor fellows who stand all day behind some bronze bars and say "No" to two-thirds of the men who approach them. Once I knew a cashier who had formed the habit of saying "No" as a prefix to everything he said. One Saturday he was in one of those barber shops where they give out tickets when the rush starts. He got ticket "No. 1." When they began calling the numbers the head barber said: "Now who has 1," and the cashier hurriedly answered "No One," and the barber said, "All right, then we will take No. 2." I had No. 2. It was the only time I ever humiliated a cashier.

But we started out to tell about jinxes, and I am really going to stick to the subject this time.

You know a jinx is a terrible thing. It will get you in bad and ruin a day, a week or a year for you without any cooperation on your part whatever.

Take this two dollar bill thing, for instance. It is horrible bad luck and the only way it can be overcome is to tear one of the corners off the bill. That's why you will find so many mutilated two dollar bills. The wise ones get hold of them.

Don't ever pass a cross-eyed girl on the street without crossing your fingers. If you do your whole day will be ruined.

Don't ever give a knife to a friend. It will cut your friendship in twain.

Don't open an umbrella inside the house. This is a particularly terrible jinx.

Don't lay your hat on a bed. If you do the next person who lies down will toss on it and be unable to sleep.

Don't walk under a ladder on the street. Bad luck will attend you all day.

If you spill salt on the dining table, throw a pinch over your left shoulder.

When you dress be careful to put on your left sock first.

In walking don't let a post come between you and your friend if you would retain his friendship.

Never pass a man who is totally blind without giving him something, even though it be only a penny.

If a man lights his own cigarette and holds the match for another's light and then tries to give you the third light from the same match, anathema upon him. He is trying to put a jinx on you.

There are others equally as bad, but if you will observe these simple rules of life you should be able to walk down the street without a building falling on you, an automobile running over you or a cop bawling you out, and eventually, by a strict observance of them, you may scrape up a bowing acquaintance with a cashier or even a plumber.

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ONE of the best loved Southern newspaper men of two decades ago was Walter C. Henderson, one of the veterans of the Atlanta *Constitution*, who had also been in the Confederate army. One night a young reporter was in his office when a visitor came in, an old man, and greeted Mr. Henderson as "General" Henderson. After they had exchanged war stories and the visitor had gone the young reporter spoke.

"I always thought you were a private during the war," he said. "Why did that man call you General?"

"Just a lot of foolishness," he replied.

But the reporter had been trained to make men talk, so he insisted.

"Well, I'll tell you," finally said Mr. Henderson. "You know, we left Missionary Ridge rather hurriedly and came on toward Atlanta."

"Yes."

"Well, the boys got out the story that I had led the whole Confederate army from Missionary Ridge to Dalton and after that they called me General."

Some time later the reporter visited Missionary Ridge when he had occasion to go to Chattanooga.

"Say," he asked, "I want to know how they got you fellows off that ridge. Why it's a sheer ascent. I wouldn't need a gun. If you would give me a two by four ten feet long I could keep a hundred men off the ridge simply by hitting them in the head as they came up."

"Son," replied Mr. Henderson, "every man must answer for himself. I can only tell you how they got me off."

"Well, how did they do it?"

"I saw them coming," he answered with a twinkle.

There was a pause after the laugh.

"Do you know how many men the Yankees had?" he asked.

"No."

"Well, I don't either, but I can give you an idea. They sent a scout out from our headquarters to find out that very thing. Here is what he reported:

"'The whole face of the earth is covered with them as far as you can see. They are led by a giant that is twenty-two feet high, and he sits on a black horse that's fifty-six hands high. He's got a flaming sword that is twelve feet long, and just as I peeped over the hill for a better look he waved his sword around his head three times and in a voice that could be heard from here to Cumberland Gap he said: "Attention, world! By nations, right wheel!"'"

* * *

FORREST ADAIR, who is in the real estate business down in Atlanta, and who a year or two ago was the imperial potentate of the Shriners, tells a yarn about a man who lived in Decatur, Ga., near him, and who had a gallon of corn liquor which he wanted to take from his office to his home. Now the Sheriff of the county was active about that time and transporting liquor had many thrills in it. The usual convenient friend told this man that if he would put the liquor in a two gallon can and cover it with a half gallon of gasolene, the gasolene, being lighter, would not mix with the liquor, and the latter, being on the bottom, would not smell if the Sheriff demanded the right to take a whiff. The thing sounded right, so the man did it. When he got home he siphoned off the gasolene and then nearly threw a fit when he tasted his liquor. It was awful.

He had an old darky working around the place, so he called him in.

"Uncle George," he said, "here is a gallon of liquor that I do not like. I will give you a big drink of it anti if you want it you can have the whole gallon."

Uncle George took the drink; shivered violently, staggered, gasped for breath and as soon as he could speak said:

"Cap'n, dat licker is des right, des right."

"What do you mean, just right?"

"Well sur, ef it had er been any better yo' wouldn't er give it to me, and ef it had er been any worse it would er kilt me."

* * *

BARNEY REILLY of New York, who was at one time in the business end of the show business, first with Savage and later with Klaw & Erlanger, but who is now a broker down in the financial district, says he dreamed a musical joke the other night. It seems that he has so often dreamed good thoughts that he had forgotten by morning that he formed the habit of placing a pencil and pad at his bedside at night.

Several mornings ago he woke up and upon reading his pad he found this written upon it:

Q.—"Can 'Home, Sweet Home' be played with variations?"

A.—"Yes, it can be done in A flat."

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JAMES J. FARNSWORTH, now in the moving picture business up on Forty-second street, was at one time in the real estate business in a little town near Miami, Fla. He had a very faithful negro working for him who was always willing to help out in an emergency. Mr. Farnsworth wondered why one particular house he had on his list was vacant all the time even when places to live were in demand, until this negro told him.

"Dey done got out er tale 'bout de hants in dat house," said the boy. "Dey says she's des natcherly erlive wid 'em. Dat's why yo' can't do nothin' wid it."

It developed that the negro did not believe in ghosts and he agreed to sleep several nights in the house for Mr. Farnsworth, who thought that even a temporary occupancy by a caretaker would serve to dispel the rumors about the place. The negro went to the house the same night, but the following morning he did not appear at the office. Mr. Farnsworth visited the house and found every evidence of a rather hasty departure. That evening just before dusk the negro came out of the everglades. He was covered with mud, his clothes were torn and he gave every indication of utter weariness.

"Where have you been?" asked Mr. Farnsworth. "What have you been doing all day?"

"What is Ah been doin' all day?" he said. "Mister Jim, Ah been comin' back."

* * *

WHY?

(Author's note: These are some things that have been bothering me. Possibly some one knows the answer to some of them.)

FIRST VERSE.

Why should they run in the Subway
When they're not in a hurry, I know?
We all know that Slow can't be driven
So why should they tell us "Drive Slow?"

SECOND VERSE.

Why should the Irishman waiter
In taking my order say "oui"?
And why should I keep up this rhyming
When I also write verse that is free?

(Author's note: The following is free verse, quite free. There are a couple of French words which mean the same thing, but I do not know how to spell them. The author does not write, speak or think French. Therefore please overlook our vulgarity in using English.)

THIRD VERSE.

Why speak of "the kids" and mean children
When a kid is a son of a goat?
Why, too, when I'm asking a question
Do they always address me as "Jack"?

FOURTH VERSE.

Why does the Magistrate fine us
For breaking the laws about speed?
And the trafficman down on the corner
Will bawl us whenever we don't.

(Author's note: Having demonstrated that I can do that stuff just as well as a regular poet, we will now have a return to normalcy.)

FIFTH VERSE.

Why tell us to live on a yeast cake?
Better Bred, I presume they will say?
Why also should "Hell" and "Hoboken"
Produce a big laugh at a play?

SIXTH VERSE.

Why, when you said it with Flowers,
In seeking her love as a boy,
Do you give her a broom and some scissors
And expect her to tremble with joy?

L'ENVOI.

Why should I not bluntly ask questions
When so many things are amiss?
So now that you've purchased the paper
Why stand for such piffle as this?

(Author's note: If you see this in print blame the Sunday Editor, not me. He has the authority.)

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Our Own Book Review.

JULIUS CÆSAR: A TRAGEDY. By William Shakespeare. Stratford-on-Avon: Olden & Antique, Ltd.

IT is clearly indicated in this work that Mr. Shakespeare devoted considerable time to study before writing his scenario, but it is to be regretted that he mixed up some of the well known facts of history in such a manner as absolutely to misinform his audiences. It is also unfortunate that he has allowed himself to adopt a too flamboyant style, particularly in the big scenes of the play.

The story is of the death of the miserable scoundrel who has inflicted so much pain and humiliation upon the schoolboys of all nations by writing a book called Commentaries, with which we shall deal later in a more vigorous fashion.

Mr. Shakespeare uses Marcus Brutus, Caius Cassius and several others to hatch a political plot against Julius Cæsar, the Roman Emperor, who was stabbed in a fight in 44 B. C. He makes of Marc Antony, the Roman general, the friend of Cæsar. After Brutus, Cassius and their gang stab Cæsar a war takes place in which Brutus and Cassius are defeated while the victorious Antony comes on the stage for a final speech.

It must be admitted that Mr. Shakespeare covers the stage nicely with corpses and the stage hands are kept rather busy mopping up the gore and dragging out the dead.

This young playwright, however, has so changed the real facts of history in an attempt to make a good story that we feel it our duty to keep the record straight. As a matter of fact Brutus was a gangster and the head of a crowd of knife fighters in Rome. His chief lieutenant was Caius Cassius. Mr. Shakespeare permits Cassius to say a speech in which he declares Cæsar must be croaked because of his ambition. This is quite incorrect. As a matter of fact, Cassius had seen his own little son crying with rage as he tried to translate Cæsar's Commentaries. He stood it as long as he could and then his blood boiled over. Revenge became a passion with him. He talked his chief, Brutus, into helping him and Brutus called a meeting of his gang that night at midnight to formulate a plan. They met in Brutus's garden. Portia, Brutus's wife, saw them trampling down her flowers and suddenly appeared with a rolling pin, reenforced by her cook who wielded a frying pan. The two women put the gang to flight. Mr. Shakespeare makes a pathetic love scene between Brutus and Portia out of this incident, which indicates how far he wanders from history.

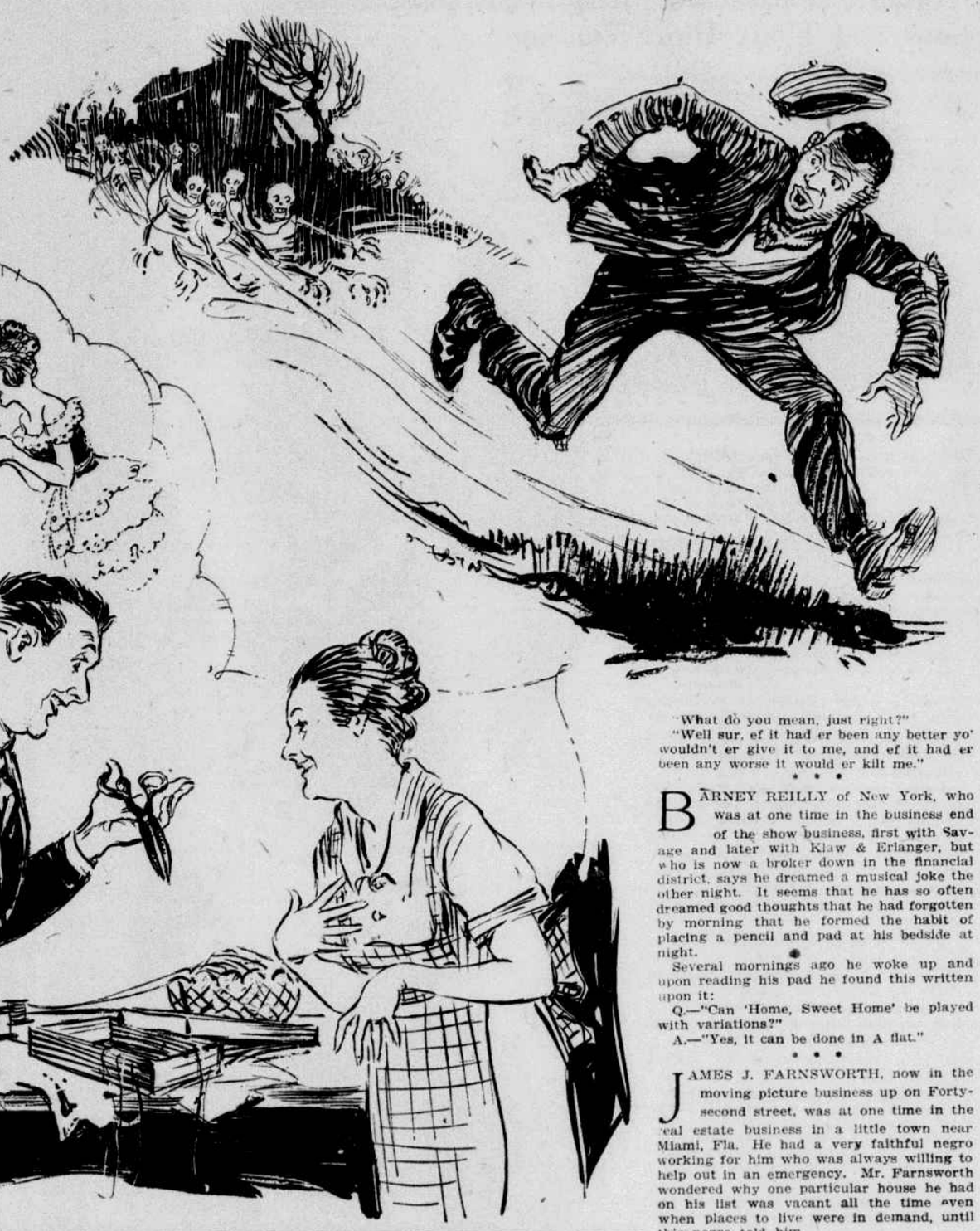
Later Brutus is permitted to say solemnly, "The clock hath stricken three," when as a matter of fact it was Portia who made the remark upon which this line is based. As the gang fled from the garden Portia called exultantly, "The cook hath stricken three."

The big scene of the play is in the Senate chamber, where Cæsar is stabbed. Mr. Shakespeare rather overdoes the thing at this point. He seeks to make a ceremony of a knife fight by some gangsters, and does it rather badly. He would have done better if he had contented himself with relating the facts. What really happened was that when Brutus and his gang approached rather crouchingly every one knew what was going to take place. The Senators began making a getaway before the police arrived, but Cæsar proudly stood his ground and said to the Senators: "Fear not, no metal can touch me."

Of course, he was mistaken, but it must be admitted that he died game. His last words before falling were directed at Brutus. Cæsar drew himself erect and hissed in Brutus's face, "You Brute."

We haven't intended to pan this young playwright too much. The play makes a very interesting evening indeed if one will bear in mind the real history of the times as we have related it.

"The place was jes' natcherly erlive with hants."



"You give her a broom and some scissors and expect her to tremble with joy."

Hobohemia Laments Passing of Hinky Dink's Bar

Czar of Chicago's First Ward Gives Way Not to Prohibition but to High Rent

Special Correspondence to THE NEW YORK HERALD.

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THE Swan Song of that favorite haunt of Hobohemia, that thirst emporium where long lines of unwashed, unkempt flotsam and jetsam were wont to foregather the day long in the hope that some son of wealth would slip them a "jit," is being sung in Chicago to-day. The song is a little late, for the object of its verse has already passed, but among a certain coterie such a matter makes little difference. They are mourning the passing of the Workingman's Exchange, that hoboes' palace at 307 South Clark street, where Alderman Michael Kenna, better known as "Hinky Dink," held forth as czar of Chicago's "Foist Ward."

The country needs no introduction to Hinky Dink's place. It is known far and wide as the place where for almost forty years the "largest and coolest in the city"—in the words of the elect—was obtainable for a nickel—a "jit" in the argot of the Dink's "boys."

The Dink would have you know that prohibition is not the cause that makes his landmark of the "old days" give way to a newer place where food will be sold exclusively, albeit Chinese food. The world famed Workingman's Exchange, to pass which in the "old days" one had to run the gantlet of bleary eyed sons of rest, is closed because old "Hi Cost" dealt it a knockout blow.

Hinky Dink Explains

Reasons for Quitting

Let the Dink explain its going:

"Prohibition didn't get me," he announces. "I would have stayed if I had been given the opportunity of renewing my lease on this dump. There was a sort o' verbal agreement about the renewal, but I suppose the landlord took it for granted I wouldn't stand a raise of 100 per cent. I'm payin' $500 a month now and the new tenant, I understand, is going to pay $1,000. I probably would have stood for a reasonable increase for the boys' sake, but not the boost for a 'grand.' So they rented the place over my head and now I've got to close up. They gave me a notice to get out.

"I've been in the neighborhood about forty years, but since prohibition I've been losing money. But I had to have a hangout for the boys, and I was willing to stand the loss. But a 'grand' a month! Well, that's different. And that's all. 'Hinky Dink's Workingman's Exchange' is closed, and I ain't gonna open again some place else."

The Dink's saloon was known far and wide as just "Hinky Dink's." To the Chicagoan no address was necessary. Every Windy Cityite knew the Dink and his place. They knew that all the policies of the First Ward machine were promulgated there, as were many of the policies of the city itself. They knew that in the days of the old Twenty-second street levee district any word issued from the Dink's place was law.

The Dink's "Exchange" was unique in that no record of crime ever attached to it. No deep, dark, dank plots against life or fortune were ever traced to its doors or to its little private "office" in the rear, where the Dink held court. Many dark deeds marked the life in the old levee district, of which the Dink was Czar, but if he ever undertook to direct criminal activities personally it was never tracked to his door. Many times the Dink warred on reformers who sought to close up the district, and many times he was called before investigating committees and grand juries, but the Dink always returned to the Workingman's Exchange smiling.

No rules of conduct governed the behavior of those who spent their days in Hinky's place lounging about the bar and indulging freely in the nickel brew. No etiquette was observed where none was needed. Every man for himself was the general attitude. The lunch, which in the old days consisted mainly of sausage heaped high upon platters and thick slices of fresh white bread, had its part in the fame of the Dink. This was the attraction that kept his place crowded to capacity day and night, day after day and year after year, when other barrel houses in the vicinity had to struggle along with their Saturday night quota of homegoing workingmen. The Dink never had any one about his place to keep "schooner" patrons from taking too much lunch. It was free as air. But to purchase a "beer" and leave it stand on the bar while one walked to the lunch counter to get one a sandwich was out of the question. A beer left alone for a moment was a beer wasted, as far as the original purchaser was concerned. Yawning mouths and slippery hands waited for just such an opportunity. Meat and drink to Dink's patrons were the slummers who came to the place to purchase beer and then turned a shoulder to the "schooner" to give the place the "once over." These persons went away sadder and wiser or practised the little subtleties of the initiate, such as openly expectorating in one's-stein or "schooner" and loudly calling profane attention to the fact. Such were the unwritten codes of behavior at the Dink's.

Old timers recount with tears in their eyes the eighty foot bar, lined the day long with eager "Bo's" who clung desperately to the large, thick glasses known as "tubs." These same old timers cherish fond memories of the twenty barrels of good light beer which were delivered daily to the Workingman's Exchange.

Some of them remember a day just before prohibition struck South Clark street when the Dink's failed to open its doors promptly at 11:30, as was the custom each day. They remember the wailing and gnashing of teeth, clanging of the patrol wagon and the rush of vags at the South Clark Street Court for the next few days. A reporter and a photographer were in the vicinity that day to make a picture and get a "yarn" on the hundred of "Bo's" making their daily rush to get into the "Exchange." Twenty bums were marshalled from nearby "flop houses" and lined up in front of the Dink's emporium in attitudes expressive of the utmost eagerness and thirst. But, alas, the reporter, the photographer and the bums were all disappointed, for the Dink failed to open his place that day and never explained why. In the crush that occurred on the sidewalk and in the descent of the police on the wailing bums the reporter got his story, but the "gang" got no beer. Those who were not taken in the police raid waited through the day, but finally in dejection proceeded to decorate the mahogany of another barrel house with the "jits" that should have passed over Hinky's bar.

In its younger days the Workingman's Exchange had nothing but its nightly crowd of active First Warders to distinguish it from the hundred other saloons within a radius of three or four blocks on South Clark street. The transition to the place which has just recently been closed was in some years gradual and in others abrupt. Time wrought wondrous changes and where the old calcimined wall sent back the glare of unshaded electric lights now stands a brave array of mahogany woodwork, glittering cut glass, beautiful mirrors and sometimes hothouse roses. And all this for the "workers," better acquainted with cinders and mulligan stews.

But the old underworld king little knew in the old days that he was building a Frankenstein, or rather many Frankensteins, who were foredoomed to shadow him into quasi-respectability in later years. Three or four years before prohibition went into effect the place changed somewhat as to its clientele. Sometimes Mr. A. Prosperous Citizen stood elbow to elbow with Mr. Dustan Raggs at Hinky Dink's. First and foremost Alderman Kenna was a diplomat. Dustan Raggs must not be reproved when he casts a bleary and longing eye at the delectable free lunch any more than that other man with a vote, Mr. A. Prosperous Citizen.

And when Mr. Citizen began dropping in at the Dink's on his way home he found no more the old round tables, with their convenient under cubby for stein or "schooner," no more the old sawdust covered floor. And though juicy roasts of beef, pork and venison in season later took the place of the more plebeian sausage, the "schooner" remained. True enough it was not in later years the coarse, heavy thing, but a more genteel vessel of thinner glass standing on a slim stem, but holding the same generous portion of beer that won Alderman Michael Kenna almost forty years of rather dubious civic fame.

Dustan Raggs never had to tell Kenna's bartenders what he wanted. They knew and when they saw him coming they shoved it across the bar to him and jingled his "jit" in the yawning cash register that played a pleasant melody in a minor key all day long. It was one of the traditions of the Dink's place that his bartenders were experts in doing the right thing at the right time.

Hinky Dink's Philosophy

For Rich and Poor Alike

"Some of these guys," he would tell you, "have terrible appetites, but what can a feller do? He can't tell them to cut it out, can he, now?" The Dink would say his say with his eye fastened on a "schooner" patron rapidly making havoc upon an outlay of roast beef, pickled beets, fresh white bread and perhaps a few tender sprouts of green spring onions. "Now, looka' that bird. Whaddayou gonna do? You can't do nothin'."

The Dink's place was many times the centre of rumors that told of dark deeds. But these were rumors and nothing more. The "Dink" kept far from crime, even at the time when he was admittedly the Levee King. True it was that in his saloon, his workingmen's palace, many details of Chicago's many political campaigns were mapped out, many ward balls were planned and in later years the "Foist's" elect met there to put over the annual First ward balls that shocked Chicago society. But the major portion of the Dink's fame is easily attributable to the size of the beer the "boys" got for their nickel. That and nothing more "made" the Dink's place.

And now the saloon that used to be pointed out to every rubberneck wagon victim and the place where the sidewalk was so thick with "Bo's" for so many years is gone. Let the "Dink" tell you what is going to replace it.

"A Chink restaurant," says the Dink. "Yeah! A Chink dump."

The place where "the largest and coolest in the city" was so long obtainable has been leased to a Chinaman. Tea and dried duck meat will henceforth be the principal commodities sold at 307 South Clark street.